

SPASTICS NEWS

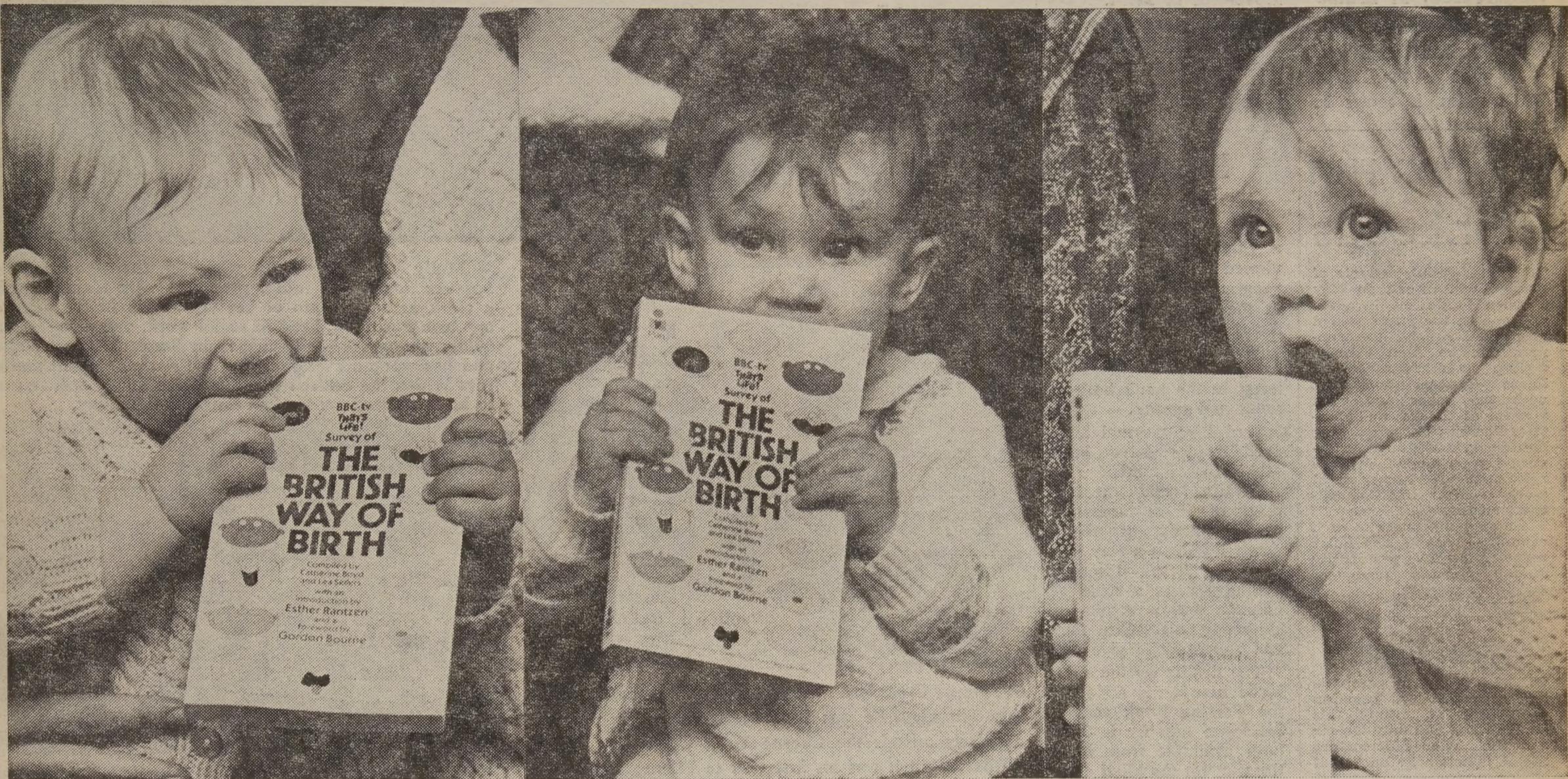
NEW SERIES PRICE 5p

30 ANNIVERSARY
1952-1982
THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

APRIL 1982

Youthful appeal for Society's 'Save a Baby' message

Our campaigning babies



The launch of the remarkable new book "The British Way of Birth" at The Spastics Society's HQ — and just three of the babies who were there to meet the photographers, the Press, the proud authors, and Esther Rantzen whose

"That's Life" programme ran the survey upon which the book is based. Like the babies, you must get hold of the book — which has a vital importance to the Society's "Save a Baby" campaign. But first, read all about that launching day on the centre pages of Spastics News.



Society welcome for Mrs Gandhi

THE sun shone with uncharacteristic warmth for March when Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, visited The Spastics Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square, London. As well as the sun, there to greet her were Mr Alex Moira, co-founder of the Society, and chairman of the Action India Group which had invited Mrs Gandhi, Mrs Joyce Smith, the Society's Chairman, and Director Tim Yeo. • Full story on pages 2 and 3.

You're looking at a new look ...

... and one to look out for, as The Spastics Society adopts the new logo shown below and above in our mast head. The change has been made for "visual

impact" and "corporate identity" and soon you will see it on everything from letterheads to the

fascias of Spastics Shops, from national advertising to publicity leaflets and literature.

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY



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The new Inco-Care Insert Pad is highly absorbent yet still discreet enough to fit securely and comfortably into the Inco-Care Ventilated Pants. It's new quilted lining disperses urine to reduce soreness, irritation and odour, with fluffer filling to absorb the average bladder release with capacity to spare. The Insert Pad has a special waterproof backing, with no plastic-to-skin

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Lin's story of courage told in Braille

THIS month sees the launch of former Society Achievement Award winner Lin Berwick's autobiography, *Undefeated*, in Braille by the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

As part of the Panda Book series, it comes in

London run for Leeds

THE Sunday-quiet streets of London will throng on May 9 when hordes of invaders will run in the city's second marathon. Among the runners will be Alan Franey, deputy administrator of Leeds General Infirmary, with the hopes and good wishes of Leeds and District Spastics Society urging him along. He is running exclusively on their behalf to raise money for its industrial work centre in Osmondthorpe Lane.

Alan is no stranger to such events — he is a regular member of TV personality Jimmy Savile's team of marathon runners.

Show flight

THE RED Arrows aerobatic team received 650 requests to appear at events this summer and can only appear at 170. The Lincolnshire Steam Spectacular on behalf of Lincolnshire Spastics Society was one of the lucky applicants for their show at the County showground on August 21-22.

three volumes at 10p each, which as Lin, who is both blind and spastic, was quick to point out is considerably cheaper than the printed version available from the Student Christian Movement at £2.50.

Her life story is already part of the Talking Book library where it is read by Sue McGregor, presenter of BBC Radio 4's 'Woman's Hour' programme.

Interest

Recently, Lin, who works as a telephonist at a City bank, was interviewed for a half hour programme broadcast in the Southern States of America. The interview plus the Braille edition has generated increased interest in the book both at home and abroad.

Said Lin: 'Several hundred copies have been sent to America and Australia and it is reaching a wide number of people many of them, newly blind. In a way it is meant for them — I hope it will give them a sense of courage and a means of struggling on when they feel they want to give up.'

The Braille version catalogue number is 45445/7, the Talking Book version catalogue number is 3872 both available from local libraries for the blind or in print from the Student Christian Movement Press, 58 Bloomsbury St, WC1.

When India's PM

**It was
a day
of sun,
smiles
and
gifts**



● Molly Chibb, aged 15, whose mother founded the Spastics Society of India, presented Mrs Gandhi with a clock as a memento of her visit. Also in the picture are Jean Potterton, head of social work, and right, Lorna White who arrived in Britain from Bombay 19 years ago and has worked ever since for the Society. This month, Mrs White, the centre's administrative officer will return to her homeland for the first time, for a holiday.



● Spencer Craze was two months premature and weighed just 3lb when he was born nearly five years ago. He regularly attends the Cheyne Walk Centre for Spastic Children but it was his first visit to Fitzroy Square. He loved the playroom where Mrs Gandhi found him persevering with a wooden block game.

● It was something of a whirlwind tour that Mrs Gandhi undertook of the centre but she had the chance to see most aspects of the Society's work there. She also met Sarah Tomlin, now 16, who, as a youngster featured on the Society's posters and now attends the Society's Thomas Delarue School, and Pam Griffin of the school's care staff.

Speaker opens flats

THIS month, the Speaker of the House of Commons officially opens two new Society flats whose building was surrounded by controversy this time last year.

The flats have been built with money raised from the BBC TV children's programme's Blue Peter appeal, which was administered by the Society.

Initially objections were raised locally about the siting of the flats in conjunction with the rest of the Society complex at Cyncoed Road, Cardiff. Now the objections belong to the past and the flats are ready as future homes either for two married couples or a married couple and two single people.

Mr Thomas is patron of the Cardiff and District Spastics Association and has been closely involved with its work from the very start, an interest that he has maintained.

The opening was on April 17.

Adventure in France for kayak team

WITH a string of successful European and UK-based field studies expeditions to its credit, the Society's Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre at Lanlivery is embarking on its first kayak expedition.

Six young physically handicapped kayakers from Cornwall and Plymouth will paddle on some of the famous rivers in the south-west region of France.

The challenge will involve mobility, communication, and commerce in a foreign country for two weeks, travelling, kayaking, setting up camp, and living with French kayakers. In addition the team will carry out two projects — one recording human physiological data in field conditions and, secondly, freshwater biological investigation into the rivers.

As well as kayakers, led by international expert Paul Vander-Molen there will be a nurse, paramedic, biologist, instructor, physiotherapist, secretary and photographer attached to the party.

Training has already begun on the River Fowey and Kayak France '82 will start from Plymouth on June 2. They will travel through central Brittany camping in the castellated Loire Valley to Tours and then pass over rivers of the Massif Central for acclimatisation and further training.

White water kayaking in earnest will have taken place on the Ariège, south of Toulouse in the mid Pyrenees whose source is in the glaciers, returning on June 12.

Funding for the expedition will be made by appeals for sponsorship, local fund raising ventures by the centre and individual members of the expedition team.

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visited the Society...



● Gita Handa, 11, was born in Delhi but now lives in Kilburn and goes to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt School in Swiss Cottage. She impressed Mrs Gandhi with her skill in operating the extended keyboard which she was trying out for the first time.



● Tara Ashton, aged six, won over Mrs Gandhi's heart as she struggled to fit shapes into a coloured plastic ball. Mrs Gandhi may be one of the most powerful women in the world, but for a moment she was just a grandmother.

Mrs Gandhi told of joint study to aid handicapped

THE Prime Minister of one of the most heavily populated countries in the world knelt on the floor and watched Tara Ashton, aged six, from Rickmansworth, experiment with a plastic ball. Mrs Indira Gandhi was visiting the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square, London, to see an exhibition of photographs mounted by the Action India Group. And part of the purpose of her visit was to learn about a joint study programme being mounted by the Society with The Spastics Society of India.

The study, which will be one of the first projects to be undertaken by the Society's new HERA Unit, will examine two small geographical areas, one urban and one rural, in each country with the aim of identifying a number of action points applicable in both the UK and India.

The Action India Group was formed to create awareness of the needs of the cerebral palsied in India and is backed by the Society.

Problems

Tim Yeo, the Society's Director, said: "We had discussed the idea back in November when the Action India Group met Mrs Gandhi in Delhi. She had expressed very great interest in the problems of cerebral palsy and other handicaps and the necessity for prevention through pre-conceptual care, antenatal care and health education. She asked to be kept in touch with the study's progress over the next 12-24 months and we would hope for a Government-backed programme to cover the areas outlined."

Many of those Mrs

Ghandi met at Fitzroy Square had been part of the Action India delegation and they included, Mr Alex Moira, co-founder of The Spastics Society, Miss Margaret Morgan, controller of Personal Social Services, Leslie Gardner, head of Education and Social Studies, Mrs Carol Myer, head of the White Lodge Centre for Spastics, Alf Morris, MP, who has been a lifelong campaigner on behalf of the disabled, and Miss Noreen Hare, superintendent physiotherapist of the Cheyne Centre for Spastic Children.

Welcome

She was welcomed to the Society by the Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, who introduced her to Mr Tony Diamond, the Secretary, Angus Reid, the Finance Director, Andrew Rosse, Director of Marketing, and Mr Derek Ashcroft, Vice Chairman. After the formalities there was a chance to meet the children who were attending the Centre. Tara had been accompanied by her young sister Kirstie, aged three, and her parents, Peter and Elizabeth Ashton, to see Dr Joseph Luder. He explained to Mrs Gandhi that he was assessing Tara to see what was best for her in the way of schooling. Tara was a very premature baby born at 32 weeks and has been regularly attending the Watford Spastics Centre.

And as she toured the building Mrs Gandhi met Molly Chibb, aged 15, a student at the Society's Thomas Delarue School. It was Molly's mother Mrs Mithu Alur who founded, and is currently Chairman of, The Spastics Society of India.

Molly, who was visiting

the centre with a number of her fellow pupils was quite undaunted at meeting her country's leader and said the prospect of doing exams was much worse. She gave Mrs Gandhi a clock made at the Society's Swansea Work Centre and also presented a wooden bowl made by residents at the Society's Coombe Farm Centre for the Indian High Commissioner.

And there were more presents to come for Mrs Gandhi brought along gifts of her own — colourful and stylish paintings, one for Fitzroy Square, one for Society headquarters and one to hang in Mrs Smith's office.

And after the Indian Prime Ministerial party had swept off to fulfill the next in a pressing list of engagements, Mr Morris was given a present in turn. This time a leather wallet and key ring by five-year-old Spencer Craze to mark Mr Morris's 54th birthday.



● Miss Margaret Morgan, the Society's Controller of Personal Social Services, introduced Mrs Gandhi to Edith Weaver, case filling supervisor, during the tour of the centre before the visit to the exhibition.



● Mrs Gandhi and Tim Yeo, the Society's Director, stand in front of a picture commemorating their first meeting in Delhi when the future of the handicapped in India was discussed. This time there was the opportunity for the Director to announce the launch of a joint study project between the Spastics Societies of both countries.



● Picture above: Alf Morris, MP, receives an unexpected birthday gift from his friends at the Society, handed over by Spencer, in the arms of his mother Kathy Craze from Fulham, and watched by Noreen Hare, superintendent physiotherapist at Cheyne Walk Centre who was a member of the Action India Group delegation to the sub-continent last November.

Mayor's gift

PRESTON and District Spastics Group received £200 as one of 56 local charities to benefit from the £8,000 raised from the Mayoral Charities during Coun Dennis and Mrs Jean Kehoe's term of office as Mayor and Mayoress.

Clean-up cash from well wishers

EACH season, visitors to Britain's premier stately home, Blenheim Palace hurl, lob and throw a variety of coins into the Palace wishing well, doubtless accompanied by some secret invocation.

And there the money lies until the annual ritual of well cleaning.

In the past, Alec Honour the Society's Boxes and Dolls officer in Oxfordshire, approached the Duke of Marlborough — his wish was to site a box in the Palace gift shop. The Duke declined but, instead, offered the Society a share from the bottom of the wishing well.

Now the well is ready for the coming influx of generous visitors and the Society has received its portion of the clean-up — a crisp cheque for £100 rather than a sackful of soggy small change.

FROGS... for funds and fun

FROGS, the voluntary staff fund raising organising group for spastics at The Spastic's Society's London HQ, goes from strength to strength, and the new idea of holding occasional lunches in the building has proved to be a resounding success — and great fun for all.

In March FROGS held the second lunch, this time with an American theme. Hamburgers and salads were served, toasted sandwiches, apple pie and cream and delicious milk shakes. A free glass of punch was offered to all customers and spirits immediately rose!

Food

The FROGS group was delighted that 100 people came, and even more so with the compliments on the food. Now FROGS hope to hold the lunches regularly.

Money raised from this and other events is used to help handicapped people, and to buy extra equipment needed in schools and centres. FROGS would welcome suggestions from readers of Spastics News for innovative ways of using their funds. Please write with your suggestions to: Mary Stanton, Secretary, FROGS, The Spastics Society.

WHEELCHAIRS Ashley Mobility

Sole Authorised Distributors for Vessa Ltd's range of Electric and Hand-Propelled Wheelchairs in the Midlands and Powys. (Sales and Service.) Write for coloured brochure and details of the "Mobility" HP plan for the Vessa Vitesse Power Chair for Mobility Allowance recipients. (Child size now available.) Also BEC Powerchair Service Agents in the Midlands.

FREEPOST, Birmingham B25 8BR. Tel 021-772 5364 or Ashley Mobility (Worcester) FREEPOST, Worcester WR4 9BR. Tel 28575.

Briefing...

'Full and frank' holiday guide

ALONE amongst the major tour operators (not those dealing solely with disabled holidaymakers), Horizon issues a Guide to Holidays for the Handicapped. The 1982 edition has just been published.

First produced last year, in the International Year of Disabled People, the warm response which met the handbook has encouraged Horizon to update and broaden the guide. Each of the hotels is listed by resort, with suitable hotels described fully and frankly from the point of view of a disabled holidaymaker — the nature of the immediate locality of the hotel and beach access, number of steps to public rooms, any areas of the hotel difficult to reach, widths of the doors to bedrooms, bathrooms and lifts, and further comments designed to help choice.

Hotels judged unsuitable for the most severely disabled are separately listed, though with description to help the less handicapped, who could still find a hotel poses no problems for them.

Copies of the guide are available at Horizon serviced travel agents and from Horizon's head office, Broadway, Edgbaston Five Ways, Birmingham B15 1BB.



• NOREEN Hare, the Cheyne Centre's head physiotherapist chats to a young patient as an assistant applies the plaster boots while mother looks on, in a scene from the Camera Talks film.

Film shows the Cheyne way

THE Cheyne Centre for Spastic Children is famous throughout the world for its care and treatment methods. One acclaimed treatment is the development of plaster boots, and now Camera Talks Ltd has produced a short film on the technique with Noreen Hare, the superintendent physiotherapist.

The application of the

plaster requires skill and practice on the part of the therapist and the co-operation of the child and parents. Plasters are maintained for between two and four weeks and are applied to both feet unless there is a marked leg length discrepancy.

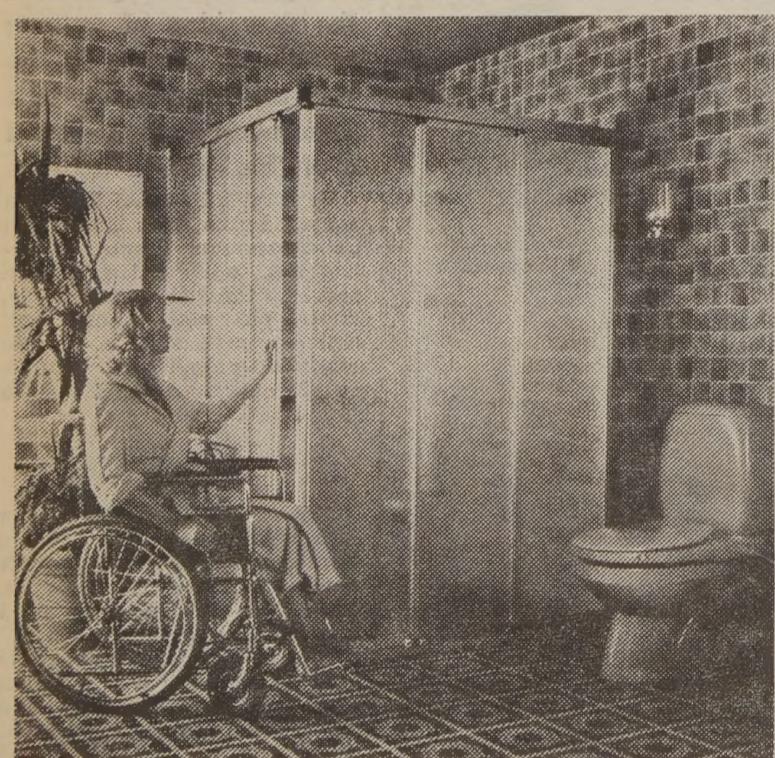
An appropriate exercise routine always accompanies the plaster treatment.

The film of this vital part of the Centre's work is available from Camera Talks Ltd, 31 North Row, London W1R 2EN.

Date for NAIDEX

NAIDEX '82, the National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition and Conference, will be held at the Cunard International Hotel, Hammersmith, London W6, from October 13-15, 1982.

The conference will consist of a series of one-day seminars.



Easy access to the shower

"SHOWERMED", a new shower enclosure designed specifically for disabled people, has been launched by Showerlux UK Ltd. While it looks like a conventional shower enclosure, it affords excellent access for users entering either by wheelchair or being carried.

Door panels are of the sliding type so that, in the event of an emergency, a prostrate body does not restrict entry, as could be the

case with inward swinging or pivot doors. Each 1,400mm (55in) door — larger than average enclosure dimensions — allows a full 1,100mm (43in) free entrance for maximum wheelchair manoeuvrability.

Installation is simple, a fully detailed fitting kit is supplied, as are compensating profiles to cope with out-of-square walls, and, when assembled, all fixings are neatly concealed.

Further details from Showerlux UK Ltd, 52 Somers Road, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 7DN. Telephone: Rugby (0788) 71476.

on books, aids, holidays, services, to help you and your family

Physiotherapy in plaster

Writers—here's your deadline

HURRY! The closing date for The Spastics Society's annual literary contest is Friday, April 30.

Handicapped people of all types and ages are eligible to enter from all parts of Great Britain.

Categories are: Schoolchildren up to and including 11 years of age. Entries not to exceed 1,000 words. First prize £15; second prize £10.

Adolescents, age 12 to 17 years. Entries not to exceed 2,000 words. First prize £50; second prize £25.

Adults, age 18 years and over. First prize £50; second prize £25.

Poetry — no guide to length can be given. Any verse form may be used.

Schoolchildren up to and

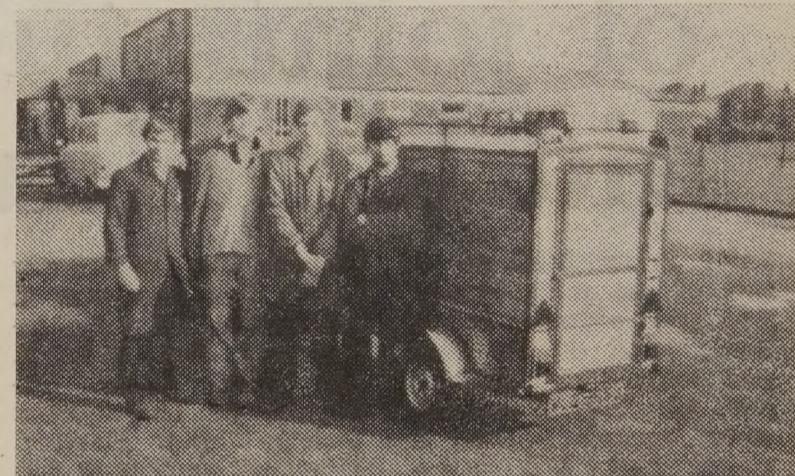
including 12 years of age. First prize £15; second prize £10.

Teenagers and adults, age 13 years and over. First prize £50; second prize £25.

Winners of the contest will be invited to a celebration lunch in London and to attend the prizegiving ceremony afterwards, with all expenses paid.

Remember, The Spastics Society wants to hear from any person with literary aspirations who was born handicapped or became handicapped during early childhood.

Send for application forms now to Mrs Nina Heycock, Organiser, 35 Harrington Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7 4JT.



• INSTRUCTOR Geoff Taylor and trainees Eddie Hamilton, George Sommer and Ian Greaves stand beside the purpose-built trailer they designed and constructed.

Custom trailer

THE Spastics Society's work centres, whether run by headquarters or local groups, are always on the trail of good money-spinning ideas to keep the centres open and the workers employed.

Now the North Manchester Work Centre has come up with a product which yet again proves the worth of a small adaptable workforce with the time to follow up a customer's requirements.

They were approached with a request for a purpose-built trailer by a customer who uses expensive carpet cleaning equipment, and needed something both robustly built and secure.

Led by instructor Geoff Taylor, trainees Eddie Hamilton, George Sommer and Ian Greaves constructed the trailer to a very superior finish. The trailer, made of heavy gauge angle iron, with oak stained tongue and groove finish

and a metal roof sprayed to match the customer's car, is fitted with a Yale lock and padlock coupling lock.

With one highly delighted customer on their books, the centre is now looking to produce more custom built trailers and will give quotations for customers' own specifications.

The number to ring is 061-681 6492, between 9 am and 5 pm, Mondays to Fridays. Ready made campers are available from £129.

Summer in the Wold

THE Inter-School Christian Fellowship is organising a holiday for deaf young people at Louth, Lincolnshire, between July 30-August 10. The holiday is open to youngsters, aged between 14-18, and will be held at Deighton Close School in the heart of the Wolds.

The cost is £30 and application forms are obtained from Miss M. Tilsey Green, 2 Bittaddon Cottages, Bittaddon, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX31 4HJ. Tel Shirwell 475.

Joint effort on 'Aids for Living'

THE "Aids for Living" stand at the Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition 1982 in March was a joint venture between Mecanoids, Stannah Lifts and Vessa, three leading manufacturers of equipment for disabled people. It was designed to increase public awareness of the products available to make life easier, more independent and thus more rewarding for many disabled people.

Mecanoids showed its Autolift domestic bathing aid. The compact Autolift is mounted on the floor by the bath, occupying only a minimum of space. Its rigid chair provides support and comfort for a person weighing up to 20 stone. Simply by turning a handle the user can raise himself over the

side of the bath and then gently lower down into the warmth and relaxation of the water.

Another useful and very practical exhibit was the Mecanoids Toilet Aid. This special frame gives all round support to those who are unsteady or likely to become unsteady while toileting, eliminating the danger of falling from the toilet, while at the same time allowing the user to be left safely in private.

The firm's range of Helping Hands reaching aids enables objects to be picked up from the floor or taken down from a height with ease. Originally designed for people confined to wheelchairs, almost everyone can benefit from a Helping Hand at some time, to retrieve that small item which has fallen behind furniture or is just out of reach.

Stannah Lifts showed a working example of its latest model Silver Rail, Bri-

tain's most popular stairlift for straight staircases.

Each stairlift comprises a compact, motorised chair unit which glides along a slim rail at the side of the stairs. The chair folds neatly away when not in use, leaving the stairs clear for other users. Where stairs have curves and bends, the Stannah Golden Rail is the answer. Here the rail is individually tailored to match each change in direction and incline on the particular staircase, however complex.

Vessa exhibited manual and electric wheelchairs and also launched new adjustable crutches.

The Vessa Vitesse is the only true indoor/outdoor curb climbing powered wheelchair available. Narrow enough to go through standard internal house doors, but powerful enough to travel up to 16 miles outdoors, it takes curbs of up to 5 inches in its stride. Its two batteries are easily

recharged overnight, and give a variable speed of up to 4 mph. The joystick is simple to operate, controlling both speed and direction. The Vessa Standard Power-chair offers a lower speed, with maximum manoeuvrability indoors coupled with more limited outdoor use. Both models can be quickly folded and then transported in a car boot.

The new Vessa adjustable crutches, are unique telescopic crutches which can be extended or retracted, making movements in and out of chairs, or on stairs and inclines safer and easier than with conventional crutches. They are specially engineered to give finger-tip control and height adjustment.

Many of the items can be obtained from social services, either direct or with the help of a grant, and the Vessa Vitesse can be made available through the Mobility scheme.

Former pupils sought for Silver Jubilee day

IT is 25 years since the Bolton and District Spastics Society founded Birtenshaw Hall School, and now the headmaster, Philip Brew is appealing to former pupils and staff to get in touch with him.

Mr Brew is organising a series of events to celebrate the Silver Jubilee and among these are a gala day open to the public on June 12 and a Jubilee fun day on July 18, the actual anniversary.

He says: "The fun day is intended to be a

day to remember for our children aged from two to 17. It will begin with a service of re-dedication and there will be a fancy dress parade, games, disco, sports and entertainment and the Mayor of Bolton will be visiting during the afternoon."

Inevitably, many former pupils and staff have left the area and the school has lost touch with them over the last

quarter of a century. So if you were at Birtenshaw Hall Mr Brew would love to hear from you and send you an invitation for the day to remember.

He can be contacted at the School, Darwen Road, Bromley Cross, Near Bolton BL7 9AB.

Facts on disabled workers

THE right of the disabled to take their rightful place in the nation's workforce received a boost with the launch of a campaign to help employers overcome their prejudices and fears about employing them. It has come with the publication of "Employers Guide to Disabilities" by Mervyn Kettle and Bert Massie, and is published by RADAR, the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation.

Problems

The book deals with the principal disabilities one by one, and gives a no-nonsense description of the problems they may present to prospective employers, and suggestions on how these problems might be overcome.

It has come out of the work of the International Year of Disabled People Employment Committee and the editors emphasise that the guide is badly needed — out of an estimated one million disabled people able to work 20 per cent are currently unemployed. And 54 per cent of registered disabled people have been unemployed for more than one year compared with figures for the rest of the population of 12.5 per cent.

Employers' Guide to Disabilities costs £5 inclusive of post and packing and is obtainable from RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London WIN 8AB.



A chat with the Chairman

THE Douglas Arter Centre in Salisbury, grew out of the realisation by the Society's Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, that a day centre for young handicapped people was needed in the area. And, living nearby, it means that she is able to maintain a close interest in the Centre's affairs since it opened nearly four years ago.

As a frequent visitor Mrs Smith has got to know the youngsters attending the centre well. Another regu-

lar visitor has been Andrew Olney who is studying photography at Salisbury Technical College and he has been building up a portfolio of pictures from visits for a project on the centre.

Here he catches Mrs Smith chatting to two of the centre's regular attenders, Stephen Thompson from Swindon who boards five days a week studying basic literacy and numeracy, and Peter Williams, who comes on a daily basis to take part in social activities.

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SPASTICS NEWS

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Clubhouse for disabled

BRITAIN'S first purpose-built sports clubhouse for the disabled was opened by Princess Anne in March.

The £100,000 clubhouse has been built after five years determined "self help" fund-raising efforts by disabled members of Windsor and Maidenhead District Sports Association for the Disabled (WAMDSAD).

The new clubhouse at Braywick Sports Centre, Braywick Road, Maidenhead, provides sporting and recreational facilities for the physically disabled in the Windsor and Maidenhead area.

Conference on school integration

A DAY conference on the integration of children with special needs in ordinary schools is being organised by the Advisory Centre for Education and The Spastics Society.

The conference, to be held in London in May, will concentrate on practical strategies for integrating children with special needs using the 1981 Education Act on special educational provision as a background. The aim is to bring together those who are already running successful integration schemes with those who would like to do so but who do not have the relevant experience.

Research project

As well as discussing examples of different schemes, there will be speakers from the National Foundation for Educational Research, which recently completed a detailed research project on integration in England and Wales, and from the Open University which is currently running a course on Special Education with integration as a major theme.

Delegates will include headteachers and teachers working in ordinary and special schools, education administrators, parents of children with special needs and handicapped students.

Apply now

The conference will be held on Tuesday, May 18, at the Central City Hotel, Central Street, London, EC1V 8DS (close to Old Street). The cost is £9 which will include coffee, buffet lunch and tea and a conference pack containing summaries of the 1981 Education Act and the Warnock Report, as well as papers from the speakers.

For further details and an application form please write IMMEDIATELY to ACE, 18 Victoria Park Square, London, E2 9PB. Tel 01-980 4596, or The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London WIN 4EQ. Tel 01-636 5020.



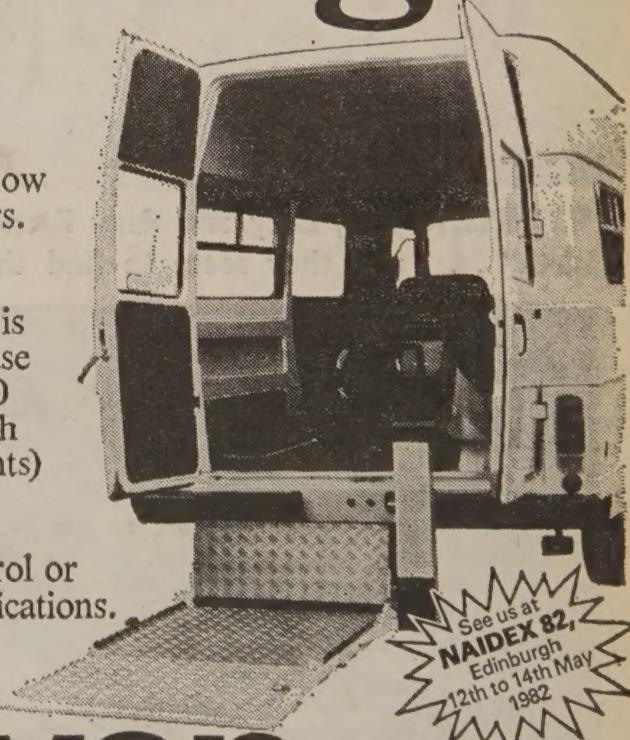
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It was 'their' book — so babies galore help



• LEFT holding the baby — and a little girl who is something of a "miracle." TV personality Desmond Wilcox — he is married to Esther Rantzen — with Tim Yeo, Director of The Spastics Society, give tender attention to Amy Elizabeth Louise Barker, the smallest baby in the survey, who weighed in at just 1lb 10oz, and 15 weeks premature, when she was born a year ago. Thanks to devoted care at Southampton Hospital — and her parents, who were at the launch, could not praise the doctors and nurses enough — her mother, Tricia, estimated that she was now a dainty, but healthy, 14lb beauty.



• IT was a publicity masterstroke to invite some of the mothers and babies launching — and Press cameras galore flashed for this bountiful line-up.



• TRIPLETS Eve, Lucy and Amy Francis are part of "The British Way of Birth" . . . and they seem to find the new book interesting.



• WELL, you can always find one baby with a nose for someone famous — and in spite of his somewhat painful attentions, Esther Rantzen still smiles .



• ESTHER Rantzen with co-authors Catherine Boyd and Lea Sellers, who compiled the book from the detailed questionnaires sent in by 6,000 women.



• WITH all those little babies arriving at The Spastics Society's usually businesslike London HQ, staff members and their offices were pressed into service as childminders and nurseries. This frenzied scene of feeding and nappy changing is set — believe it or not — in the Director's office!

Book crusade aids 'Save a

"IT'S not just a book, it's a crusade for mothers and babies," declared one of the women whose experiences of childbirth are included in *The British Way of Birth*,* the remarkable survey of the authentic voice of 6,000 mothers, which was launched at The Spastics Society's London headquarters.

The book was born when Esther Rantzen, presenter of the BBC TV programme "That's Life" asked mothers having babies in 1981 if they would take part in a survey about maternity services in Britain. Only they could report on actual conditions;

The staff copes efficiently — in ALL circumstances

d to launch 'The British Way of Birth'



These stories are featured in the book to the



• ESTHER introduces her own son Joshua to the new book.



• THE Spastics Society's Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, shares a motherly moment with Louisa Jane Watt, aged nine months, one of the babies in the massive survey.

Stories for mothers—and Save a Baby' campaign

They could tell of the experience of children they could praise the hospitals who treated them with sensitivity could air their "cattle market" if they found them. It could in fact, for the first time, offer the Society's point of view to mandarins who plan services.

The book was compiled and co-authored by Catherine Boyd of the Society, and Lea Sellars of BBC TV, and its importance can be judged by the fact that on the day of its publication, the BBC devoted 75 minutes of peak viewing time to a special programme on the survey.

The programme made fascinating viewing, the book makes fascinating reading, revealing for the first time exactly how women feel about the experience of pregnancy and childbirth.

Other important findings:

- 1 in 3 did not enjoy their pregnancy
- 1 in 5 found their hospital doctor at the ante natal clinic "not very helpful and sympathetic"
- 1 in 5 did not get paid time off work to attend clinic
- more than 1 in 5 said clinic visits made them feel either "unimportant" or "anxious"
- nearly two thirds felt they did not have reasonable freedom of choice about the position in which they gave birth
- three-quarters said they had never met the midwife who delivered their baby
- 1 in 5 said they gave up breastfeeding within a month of starting.

* "The British Way of Birth", compiled by Catherine Boyd and Lea Sellars, with an introduction by Esther Rantzen and a foreword by Gordon Bourne. A Pan Original, price £1.50.

Vital

A programme was taken off the air before the Society was formed. Maternity services are one of the major concerns, of the vital issues the Society's Save a Baby campaign which has been fighting for improved services for mothers and babies to Britain's alarming numbers.

Circumstances ...



This is the Information Department, taken from the babies and their staff "nurses." Both groups enjoyed the experience!

Services for disabled 'Blind eye' turned to law-breaking councils

A SHOCK report* published in March claims that the Secretary of State for Social Services is failing in his duty by refusing to investigate allegations that several councils are leaving hundreds of disabled people without the services Parliament intended they should have.

Peter Mitchell, joint author of the report, claimed today that Ministers were turning a blind eye to widespread law-breaking.

"When we present an individual's case to the Minister he will force their council to provide or restore the service; but he has shown no concern for others in the same area with the same unmet needs."

"Under Section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 local authorities must assess the needs of disabled people for a variety of services, such as home help, meals on wheels, aids and adaptations, a holiday and a telephone. If they accept need they must make arrangements for the provision of the service. Equally, they must not withdraw a service if the need for it has not diminished."

"Of 13 councils referred to the Secretary of State for Social Services since March 1981:

- 4 refused to assess need for a holiday
- 1 refused to assess need for aids
- 4 failed to provide a telephone within a reasonable time after acceptance of need
- 1 failed to provide adaptations
- 2 had withdrawn home help
- 1 had withdrawn assistance with telephone rental payments, causing people to lose their telephones.

The one case referred to the Secretary of State for Wales concerned failure to provide a meals on wheels service.

"In every case the individuals who approached RADAR represented the tip of the iceberg. Enquiries by the Secretary of State have been prolonged (one has now lasted a full year) and he has been satisfied if the individual has had the service provided. Despite frequent requests he has refused to ask councils for information about others in a similar position.

"In Wandsworth pressure on the council resulted in a telephone being provided for the woman referred. The council decided that 129 other clients who were on a waiting list should also be provided with telephones. By contrast, in Liverpool a disabled woman whose case had been referred to the Secretary of State obtained her telephone but many still remain on the waiting list."

The report analyses cases which had been investigated by Mrs Ursula

Keeble and Mrs Jane Cook between October 1980 and October 1981. The most frequent complaints concerned aids and adaptations (37 per cent), telephones (32 per cent) and the home help service (19 per cent). Many were resolved satisfactorily following intervention by Mrs Keeble and Mrs Cook. Apart from clear cut breaches of the law many problems involved the quality of assessment and charges for services.

Mrs Cook said that many disabled people were becoming dissatisfied with the way councils were operating the Act.

"Local authorities are empowered to fix their own criteria of need and to make what provision they see fit for disabled individuals. Standards of care vary widely,

"There is no means of appeal against assessments and RADAR could only help 40 per cent of those who felt their needs were inadequately understood and catered for by trying to persuade local authorities to see their clients' point of view. The remaining 60 per cent included many elderly people, living alone and desperate for assistance."

*Putting Teeth in the Act, a report by The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation on behalf of 14 national charities — one of them The Spastics Society — on implementing Section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, available from RADAR price £3 including postage and packing.

The Director's column

THIS column is a new venture which is designed to play some part in overcoming the perennial problem of communication within the Society. I am more and more conscious that there is an unnecessary amount of secrecy within our organisation. Indeed there are remarkably few matters which really need to be treated as confidential, and one of the things which I should like to try and do over the next year or so is introduce a much more open style of management.

Accordingly you can expect this column to be full of indiscretions and these will, I hope, help to make it more readable. In addition I will try and discuss the topics which would not normally be covered elsewhere in Spastics News.

I am afraid the first topic I am going to talk about is money, but for once the news is encouraging rather than the reverse. When I arrived at the Society in October 1980, the accounts which had just been published showed that the Society had suffered the highest financial deficit in its history—an alarming figure of more than £800,000.

The following month in November 1980 the Executive Council agreed that it was necessary that this deficit should be completely eliminated by the financial year 1982/83—in other words the year that is just starting. On the face of it, this was a formidable task.

Eighteen months later, however, I am glad to say that we are well on the way to achieving it. This progress has only been possible with the whole-hearted support and co-operation of staff and volunteers up and down the country who are involved in the many different activities of the Society.

Tim Yeo writes to you

What is even more important is the progress that has been achieved through improved efficiency. The cuts in services have been kept to a minimum, and even the deeply regretted cut in the careers and employment advisory service has been partially reversed with a number of careers officers being kept in post.

What has brought all this to mind was the fact that during March the Executive Council met to discuss the Society's budget for 1982/83. This is, of course, one of the most important meetings of the year, and represents the conclusion of almost six months work by the Society's staff not only in the Finance Division but in all other divisions as well.

The budget shows that subject to no unforeseen circumstances arising, it should be possible for the Society to break even during the current financial year. This is excellent news as it means our activities are on a more secure

financial footing than they have been for several years.

The subject of finance reminds me that the future of the Society's sheltered workshop at Meadoway Works has been under discussion this month. More than a year ago the Society approached Remploy with the aim of discussing whether they would be interested in taking over the administration of Meadoway Works. This seemed a logical step as Remploy's objective is the provision of sheltered employment for disabled people, and our initial approach was warmly welcomed.

Negotiations continued for more than a year. Eventually however, it emerged that Remploy was unwilling to provide us with satisfactory assurances about the future employment of our workforce. Actually the Society would not countenance any transaction which could jeopardise the jobs of the disabled workers at Meadoway and the negotiations had to be terminated.

We now wish to adopt a positive approach to the Society's involvement in the provision of sheltered employment for cerebral palsied adults. Accordingly we have set up a small team to investigate how Meadoway Works can be made into a more viable



unit from a financial standpoint, and how the work opportunities can be improved for the disabled and other employees there.

I am hopeful that in due course we shall be able to make a significant improvement at Meadoway. In the process we may learn some things about the running of sheltered workshops which could be useful to other organisations whose workshops function at even larger deficits than our own.

So much for this month's column. Next month I will try and deal with those issues which don't involve money.

Mystery man is children's 'sugar daddy'

CHILDREN in the Society's schools and centres have an unknown benefactor who knows just what children like to eat, and in the last few months has acted as a "sugar daddy."

Mrs Patricia Maier, the Society's receptionist, told Spastics News: "A few weeks before Christmas we received a visit from a most charming Indian gentleman. He wanted to bring a gift from somebody who was to remain anonymous. Thereafter he made about six trips with a small hand trolley and brought 20 cases of biscuits each containing 12 packets of assorted varieties. They were to go to the children the Society helps.

"Then he reappeared recently — he needed some help to carry the next gift — 56lb of pure honey."

The honey in a huge drum bore the message: "For the sweet children to sweeten their lips — with thanks to Him on high — have in health!"

Although the benefactor and his messenger wish to remain anonymous, the Society and the children who enjoy treats are very grateful.

Family Fund to continue 'vital role'

THE Family Fund, set up to help families with severely handicapped children, is to receive a government grant of £4.6 million for 1982. Grants to families in 1981, the TYDP, reached £4.1 million and the new allocation will enable the fund to continue to spend at this level. This was announced in March by Mr Hugh Rossi, Minister for Disabled People, when he visited the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust in York, who administer the Fund.

Mr Rossi said: "What began as a temporary measure to ease the burdens of families with severely handicapped children, has come to fulfil a vital role over the years. The government has reviewed the work of the fund and concluded that it should continue in being for the foreseeable future, certainly for the next five years.

"The strains of caring for a handicapped child — especially one with severe disabilities — can be immense. These strains may be physical, psychological and financial. While they cannot be wholly relieved, they can be eased. Existing financial benefits and the services provided by local authorities and voluntary bodies help, but do not necessarily meet all the needs. Assistance with such additional items as labour-saving domestic equipment, transport and holidays for the whole family are also important and this is where the Family Fund's contribution is so valuable."

• The Family Fund was set up in 1973 with £3 million provided by the Government. It is administered by the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust. It was originally seen as a short-term measure for meeting special financial needs from public funds. It has subsequently received further Government grants and these are now made on an annual basis.

Families obtain help from the fund by direct application, or through a GP, health visitor or social worker. They are visited by one of the fund's social workers to assess eligibility. The needs that may be met are family holidays and outings, laundry equipment, clothing and bedding, as well as transport and other items. The Family Fund does not provide services which should be provided by health or local authority.

Queen's Guide Award for Jane — after four years of hard work

JANE Stidever spent four years working towards her Queen's Guide Award, which involved 24 badges for activities such as canoeing, life saving, swimming, first aid, cookery, child nurse, horse-riding and knitting. And for Jane,

born spastic in Cyprus 15 years ago, knitting was the hardest task of all to perform. In the end her mother re-wrote the patterns so that Jane could follow them.

Horse riding was the only badge in which she was given a concession — she did not have to lead the horse. In canoeing Jane shone, to the extent of capsizing the canoe and pulling it to the bank. In addition, Jane teaches handicapped children to swim.

After nine operations Jane, who is a member of the 1st Bardon Hill Quarry canteen. Jane is a member of the Coalville and District Spastics



Special School, Leicester. She received her award at a ceremony at Bardon Hill Quarry canteen. Jane is a member of the Coalville and District Spastics

Society of which her mother is vice-chairman. Picture shows Jane Stidever with her parents.

Picture by the Clarion, Markfield.

Curtain up for a 'new look' in premieres

FILM premieres usually conform to a set pattern — late night events sparkling with jewels and celebrities, champagne and glamour. However the premiere of James Uys's "The Gods must be Crazy" broke the mould, and could be an innovation that will catch on. For this premiere, sponsored by Capital Radio for the Stars Organisation for Spastics was billed as a "family premiere" and everyone took their children along.

It was a huge success, the children released balloons tagged with their names for a prize for the one reaching the greatest distance. And as well as cheers for the film which revolves around a Bushman in the Kalahari Desert finding a single Coca Cola bottle dropped

from the sky, there were cheers for Marc Stewart. He is the son of Radio DJ Ed Stewart, and it was his fifth birthday and he was presented with a huge cake.

Adding their best wishes to the film's success and Marco's birthday were SOS members and friends, Keith Chegwin, Maggi Philbin, Ed Stewart, Liz Crowther, Clive Dunn, Dickie Henderson, Adrian Love, Brian Kay, Steve Emmerison, John Wade, Gillian Humphreys and Bonnie Langford.

The premiere was held at the Classic Haymarket and Adrian Love, like Ed a BBC Radio DJ, compered events and introduced the stars.

In all, the new look in film premieres should net the SOS £1,000.

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Designed from a concept put forward by a crutch user, Vessa has developed a unique telescopic elbow crutch. This makes stairways, steps and difficult inclines far less of a problem and getting in and out of a seat much easier. Adjusted for height by a simple finger-tip control, the new crutch also incorporates a double action safety mechanism to prevent unexpected adjustment when weight bearing.

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His aim—income growth for the Society



ANDREW Ross has been appointed Director of Marketing bringing the executive structure of the Society up to full strength. Now each division of the Society's work has a Director, with Derek Lancaster-Gaye as Deputy Director, Michael Brophy, Director of Regions and Angus Reid, Director of Finance.

Mr Ross who is 36, was educated at Sevenoaks School and Cambridge

where he read Modern Languages. On coming down from University he worked as an export salesman for Letraset before joining a firm of professional fund-raising consultants, followed by a stint in advertising and public relations, a course on post graduate business studies at Fontainebleau, and, most recently, marketing manager for one of Courtaulds major textile yarn producing divisions.

Mr Ross said: "The emphasis of my business career has been on marketing and marketing communications with some specialised experience of charitable fund raising. I hope to be able to draw on this broad range of experience for my work for the Society. In simple terms I see my job as seeing a growth in real income. The Society has made splendid progress over the last year in restoring financial security. Part of my job is to help see real income grow and as a consequence of that growth, the activities our income supports can grow.

"My direct responsibilities include the Society's traditional fund raising activities such as the annual mailing appeal, legacies, the shops organisation, mail order catalogues as well as capital fundraising projects. I am also going to be concerned with innovations.

The gift of therapy and fun for Joanne

THIS special trike has transformed the life of Joanne Turnpenny of Castleford who attends Rock Mount School, Barnsley. A similar one was donated to her school through Community Playthings, she used it for therapy, and it was soon obvious that Joanne was deriving both great benefit and pleasure from the trike. Her legs are getting stronger, she is able to stand better and she was loath to get off the trike.

Eventually it was decided that the only answer was for Joanne to have a trike of her own, and this was bought for her by the Castleford and District Spastics Society with the help of a grant from the BBC television Blue Peter appeal, administered by the national society.

Now Joanne can go out with her playmates and accompany her mother shopping. She was thrilled with the gift and typed a thank you letter on the school's electric typewriter.

Mind you, Joanne had to garage her bike for a week recently when she went on a pilgrimage to Lourdes with her grandmother and aunt. And the hope is that with the aid of the trike, one day Joanne will be able to walk.



Landlord steps in to 'save' group meetings

RAWMARSH District Spastics and Handicapped Society's future has been guaranteed after a surprise move by Rotherham District Council threatened its continuance. For 23 years the Society has held its regular monthly meetings in the Council Chamber. Then, said Society member Ron Edwards, "out of the blue" the group received a letter saying they could no longer use it.

"It appears the council have another use for the building now. When we heard we would no longer be able to use the Council Chamber we were very upset and it looked as though we would have to discontinue meetings."

"However, the landlord of the Clarence Hotel, Parkgate, Gordon Walker, heard of the problem from one of his regulars, Jimmy Snaith, who is also a Society official, and immediately volunteered the use of a room at the hotel."

'Save a Baby' week

DELEGATES from all over the country attended a pilot conference in Slough to launch a nationwide series to be held in each of the Regional Health Authorities during The Spastics Society's "Save a Baby" week, beginning on June 14.

The aim of the Slough conference was to promote a dialogue between consultants, midwives, GPs, consumers on the theme, "maternity care — the way forward."

The morning session concentrated on the East Berkshire area and a spirited debate ensued between consultants and GPs on their respective roles. As a result of the interest shown, the Chairman Designate of the East Berkshire District Health Authority, Dr D. M. McWilliams, decided to set up a working party to look into the issues involved.

The afternoons' highlight was a presentation on neonatal care and prevention of handicap unit by Dr J. D. Baum of the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford and Dr J. A. Macfarlane, Clinical Lecturer in Paediatrics at Radcliffe Infirmary. Dr Baum's subject was the "Care of the Sick Infant in the Oxford Region" and Dr Macfarlane spoke on "What is the outcome for high risk infants?"

There will be 16 regional conferences in all in the new health authority areas and each will focus on the problems and patterns of care in that region.

And the conferences will premiere the new Spastics Society film.

Further information on dates and venues of the conferences can be obtained from the Information Department, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

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List

Listing the implications of being spastic, he says: "Also you would have to contend with the humiliation of having a bath with your mum in the same room."

He adds: "People who

'Thank you' to Beech Tree House

JUST over four years ago we had the doubtful pleasure of taking our daughter Frances to Beech Tree House at The Spastics Society's Meldreth Manor School to begin full term boarding under the care of Mr Malcolm Jones. Our feelings were very mixed after a long struggle to get her accepted for Beech Tree. Did we really want to leave her? On the way home we stopped the car and we howled.

Now four years later the

tears have been flowing again, this time because Frances has left Beech Tree.

It is difficult to describe our feelings about Beech Tree. To say we feel that the care and concern Frances has received from everyone at Beech Tree is unique in this country, would be an underestimation. Under the guiding light of the indomitable Malcolm, the unit is run with orderly confidence, each member of staff

knowing exactly how they should react to the behaviour of the children, however bizarre it is.

We, as parents, and our elder daughter, have been

LETTERS

involved totally with the unit. We have spent many weekends, holidays and outings sharing in the

laughter, tears and work, likewise the staff have spent days with us in our home, helping us to cope at home. This has all helped in a better understanding of each other's problems, and leaving us full of admiration for the young, enthusiastic staff, and with many happy memories to look back on.

During her stay at Beech, Frances has matured into an independent child who can now communicate, which was

difficult before, she can mix well with normal children and adults, and has managed the transition to a different school with a minimum of fuss, all because of the complete dedication of one person, who had a dream of helping children with extra problems caused through their other handicaps.

It has been a difficult task to show Malcolm and Nina just how much we have appreciated their work with the children and

we thought one way was to let you know how much it has meant to us as parents to have been involved with Beech Tree and for Frances to have received the best tuition, mixed with love, that there is available.

Our only hope is that many more children can benefit from this care from many more Beech Tree Houses.

CHRISTINE and MARTIN WHILEY,
Great Brington,
Northampton.

Benefits—never take 'No' for the final answer

FIRST, I will give you a bit of background knowledge. I am 38, I'm registered blind, and spastic. I have no sight at all, I can manage inside, but I can't manage outside, unless I'm with someone.

In 1975, I applied for the mobility allowance, in March '76 I was refused, so I made an appeal. It took from March until July for that appeal to be heard, and another two months before I got the result. After repeated requests for information from the DHSS about my appeal, I heard I was successful.

I asked the local social services department if they would help me with the cost of installing a telephone, they refused because there is a phone box at the end of the street. They didn't consider the personal situation. I sacrificed

NOT all our readers can "read" Spastics News in the conventional way, some depend on kind friends taping the newspaper for a cassette recorder. One of them is Mr Melvin Champney who wrote to us in braille. Here are some extracts from a long and interesting letter:

myself and paid for the installation. I have a press-button dial as I can't manage the ordinary dial. I pay £3 extra rent a quarter for the dial, but it's worth it.

The only good things to happen to me in the IYDP, was being registered with The Spastics Society.

I have made new friends by being registered. When you need help, or advice, you always get more satisfaction from the people who get pleasure and reward by helping those

who can't understand the "office rubbish" that's written on the forms. You must gain the confidence of the person who has asked for help, and the best way to get that confidence is to talk in plain and simple language. Some people just need someone to talk to. I have been in that position very often myself. I always say to myself, "there's someone worse off than me and there'll be a brighter day tomorrow."

Every time there are government cuts, the first

people who suffer are those who can't take them. Some social services departments care or do their best to help everyone who needs help. But you must try and keep up with the times. When charities like The Spastics Society, the blind, the deaf, have to rely on public generosity instead of the State providing the funds some will always be forgotten.

I am interested in people, and their welfare. When the welfare officer came from The Spastics Society last July, we decided to ask the local social services department to instal a shower because I have a problem getting out of the bath. What seemed to be a simple request to us, has turned out to be a "shame." In November we were promised the shower would be installed before Christmas, the social services department and the landlord blamed each other for the delay. Then the bad weather got the blame. After persistent pressure by The Spastics Society, my county councillor, later the Press, and myself, the shower was installed at the end of January.

Shower

The shower isn't working properly, the curtain isn't long or wide enough, the water doesn't run hot for long enough. You pull the cord that dangles from the ceiling to switch the shower on, how can a totally blind person see if it is working? The door opens half way, there's a rubber stopper on the floor to stop the door hitting the shower base. I've asked for the door to be taken off, and a sliding door fitted but that request is too close to common sense.

I have the Spastics News read on tapes by the boss of the special unit of Gateshead Social Services Department and I will never be able to thank them for all their help. My local Spastics Association helped me with a cassette recorder as my local social services department didn't wish to help. They haven't been to see me for three years.

I wish to give all disabled readers this advice: apply for every benefit there is, never take no as the final answer.

MELVIN CHAMPNEY,
Skerne Grove,
Leadgate,
Co Durham.

MOTORING

by John Byworth



Technical information.
Trika 70:

Four stroke engine with string pull start.

Overall length 51in. Overall width 31in.

Seat height 22in.

Weight 170lb.

The fuel tank holds a gallon of petrol, to give up to 12 hours running. Specially fitted back and side supports, leg guard and a foot rest are standard with both front and rear carrying baskets available as an optional extra.

A larger model is also available for people who are tall or over approximately 12 stone in weight. The disabled plate as shown in the photograph is no longer fitted.

Price for the basic Trika is £495 and with average modifications approx £540, which is exempted from VAT. A purpose-built drive-on car trailer is approx £220 but unfortunately this is subject to VAT. Insurance is the same as for a battery wheelchair. No licence or road tax is required.

Stable

The modified Trika is provided with all hand controls and lowered gearing to give a smooth stable ride at a legal four mph. Being petrol driven, there is no limit to the distance that can be travelled, and it will give 8-12 hours running on a gallon of two-star petrol, although this means it is not suitable for indoor use.

Tyres are of a balloon type, being very wide with a low air pressure, this gives the Trika its stability and enables it to mount a standard kerb without any discomfort to the rider.

The company producing these bikes from Honda kits do each modification for the individual rider, and as the staff consists of only two men working from a private house, personal service is guaranteed, and each separate requirement can be catered for.

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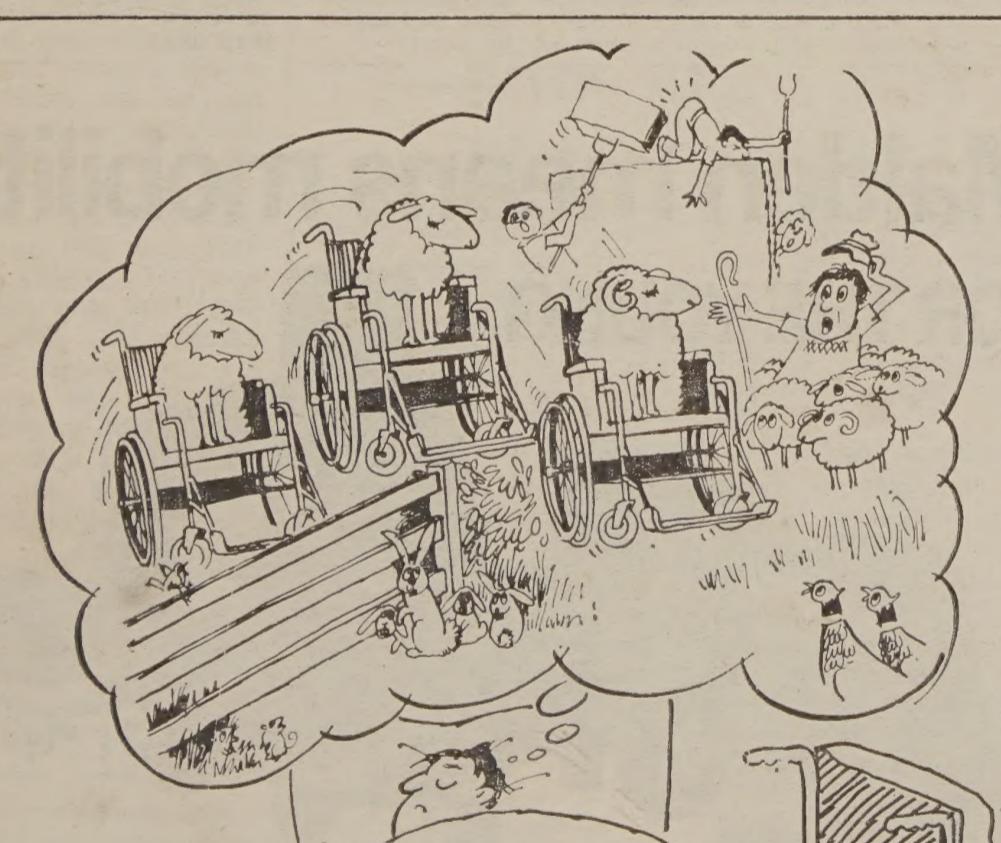
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KATHLEEN O'BRIENE is an avid collector of Australian stamps, but so far she has not had much luck in adding to her collection. She says; "I have written lots of letters and only had two back from people." Kathleen is 34 and lives at Scalesceugh Hall Home for Spastics, Carleton, Carlisle, CA4 0BT, Cumbria, and very much hopes readers of Spastics News will be able to supply her with stamps from "Down Under."

FOR SALE — Batric three-wheeler powered chair; attendant control. Further information from 4 Papworth Way, Cressington Gardens Est, Tulse Hill, SW2 2NL, phone 01-674 5927.

FOR SALE — Meyra electric wheelchair, excellent condition, one year old, £1,200. Phone Harrogate 501010 for further details.

For sale, adult wheelchair, Zimmer GB chrome, padded seat and back. As new £25 ono. Contact M. J. Hipkiss 021-429-9298. Delivery possible in the West Midlands area.

For sale: Toyota 901 knitting machine, complete with flat table, tilting table, ribber and automatic knit tracer for patterns. As new, £325 ono. Contact Karen Goodman, c/o Ruth Hunt, tel 01-361 9390.

Home from Home holiday for handicapped children and their parents offered by Peter and Jane McInnes at their home, 59 Richmond Park Road, Bournemouth. The house is next to Queen's Park Golf Course, a mile from the beach and sea, and 20 minutes by car from the heart of the New Forest, with Poole Harbour, Brownsea Island, Sandbanks, Corfe Castle and Swanage all within easy reach. The McInnes' are members of Gateway, Royal Mencap and the Campaign for the Mentally Handicapped and are willing to babysit for parents in the evening. They cannot take children without parents but can offer holidays to parents needing a break. Accommodation is a double bedded room and one with twin beds and a cot can be supplied. Breakfast, lunch (packed if required), and an evening meal are included in the price of £10 per day per adult and £7 per day per child up to the age of 16. Contact the McInnes on 0202-34609 or write to 59 Richmond Park Road, Bournemouth, BH3 8TU.

HAVE you a handicapped brother or sister? If so, and you are under 18 years of age, you could help to provide information for a study that is being done on the ways in which YOUR life is affected, and how you and your handicapped brother or sister get on together.

If you would like to help in this way, the Disabilities Study Unit would be glad if you would complete a questionnaire. Your co-operation will be of great assistance to them in considering what steps can be taken to improve the relationship between brothers and sisters where one or more of them is handicapped in some way.

Copies of the questionnaire can be obtained from Miss Sue Kendall, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.

Budget — the facts on benefits and tax relief

THE main news for charities from the Budget — as reported in Spastics News last month — was the disappointment that in spite of all the campaigns and appeals, the Chancellor refused to grant relief from the crushing burden of VAT, currently costing The Spastics Society £300,000 a year. But there was better news for individual disabled people and the Society's Parliamentary lobbyist, Amanda Jordan, has prepared this survey on the way the Budget will affect them.

Other benefit changes include:—

The increase in the capital limit on the amount that a person can have and still get supplementary benefit from £2,000 to £2,500. This will fully restore the value of the limit to when it was introduced in November 1980.

The therapeutic earnings limit for those receiving incapacity benefit by 21 per cent from £16.50 to £20.

The earnings disregard for those receiving invalid care allowance will be doubled from £6 to £12, which will restore its original 1976 value.

All the new rates of benefits which will come into operation from November will be published in the Disability Rights Handbook available at the end of the year.

The news for charities was disappointing. The Chancellor said in his speech that he had studied the case for granting VAT relief for charities, "exhaustively" but had decided that it was not possible to implement any change this year. However,

some existing VAT reliefs were extended to help the disabled and the charities serving them.

- The relief for specialised aids for the disabled will now include cars or vans adapted to carry a disabled passenger in a stretcher or wheelchair.

- The relief for aids for the disabled will also now cover purchases of aids by a charity to keep for the general use of disabled people (previously the aids were only zero-rated if bought by or for a particular disabled person or for use in a charitable institution).

- The zero-rating of donated medical and scientific equipment to cover repairs, maintenance and spare parts for the equipment, when paid for from charitable funds.

In addition the Chancellor announced a number of further tax reliefs to assist charities.

- Exemption from capital transfer tax limit, on gifts to charities was increased from £200,000 to £250,000.

- All deferred liabilities on development land tax for charities have been completely extinguished.

- Exemption from stamp duty on transfers of assets to charities.

The Chancellor also announced a new scheme for the long-term unemployed. The full details of the scheme have not yet been announced but The Spastics Society may well have an interest in it as the object is to provide work on local community based projects.



• WENDY Spillet, of the Sheppey Group, receives her £200 memo writer from the manager of the Chatham Marks and Spencer store.

Stores display caring side of commerce

THE Isle of Sheppey Spastics Society has discovered that along with special offers, loss leaders, and the steady chiming of the checkouts, the Tesco store locally has a heart of gold.

For when the Society contacted Tesco's head office to say: "We are able to get around your lovely big store and through the checkouts but we're sorry to say that we have great difficulty in getting into your shop in wheelchairs. Do you think anything can be done to help us over this problem?"

The Society did not really expect more than a polite reply saying nothing could be done. Now members are over the moon for Tesco's regional surveyor on receiving the letter came up with a simple and inexpensive plan to solve the problem.

Slope

As a result, wheelchair shoppers now arrive at the store via the gentle slope up to the electrically operated exit doors and press a bell which rings at the nearest checkout. The checkout operator then presses a switch to open the doors, and the shopper can enter and move into the shopping area through a gate exit next to the checkout.

Shopping completed, the wheelchair bound shoppers

can leave the store in the normal way using the checkout for the disabled.

The total cost of the necessary equipment was less than £250, yet it makes the Sheerness Tesco's the only store on the island tuned to the needs of disabled shoppers.

Mrs Ward of the group said: "We were thrilled to hear that something could and would be done. Now everyone is happy — we can shop with ease and Tesco has got us as regular customers!"

Aid

And the Chatham branch of Marks and Spencers has also come to the aid of the disabled and shown the caring side of commerce. Group member Wendy Spillet was assessed by the Society as someone who would greatly benefit by a memo writer. As her mother Lynne used to work for M & S it was suggested that it might be worth her while to contact the store with a request for help — the memo writer costs in the region of £200.

The Spillets approached the store and to their delight, M & S were only too delighted to oblige, and the presentation of a memo writer was made to Wendy by the store manager. Now Wendy is able to communicate wherever she goes even if she is having difficulty with her speech.

Mother fights to save her son's school

FOR 12 YEARS Jacqueline Banes fought to keep her son out of a special school — now she is fighting to get more parents to send their handicapped children there.

The school under attack is the Trueloves School at Ingateshaw — it is threatened with closure unless it can double the present number of pupils. It fails, then the end of the school year in July next year will signal the end of the school.

Jacqueline Banes sent her spastic son Paul there just three years ago after battling to keep him in ordinary school. Her reluctance was based on not wanting to accept that Paul was different from other children. In the

end, after much agonising, she did, and her only regret is that he did not attend sooner. She feels that the small number of pupils attending the school run by The Shaftesbury Society could be because other parents like her refuse to believe their handicapped children need special schooling.

Now she has started a campaign urging parents to send their children to Trueloves saying: "We are trying to get in touch with parents of other handicapped children because it is not the children who need to be educated it's the parents who have got to accept they have handicapped children."

Jacqueline and her husband admit they had a lot of doubts when they first

saw all the wheelchairs on their initial visit to the school — they did not want their son to go to a school where there were so many severely handicapped children. It was only after they had visited the classrooms, talked to the headmaster and seen for themselves what was being achieved that the doubts disappeared.

Along with parents' reluctance to part with their children causing the shortfall in numbers to 19, local authorities are now opening their own special schools rather than send children out of the district. However, the expertise acquired by the school over 25 years is something that will be lost to handicapped children forever if, as seems likely, it is forced to close.

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The frame contacts and correctly supports the body in four places: feet, knees, buttocks and chest. Flexibility is easily adjustable; backwards and forwards and side to side movement can be controlled independently.

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STARS APPEAL - WITH A CAST OF THOUSANDS



• Sir John Mills and Susan Hampshire at the Ski SOS Appeal launch, and seem ready for the Celebrity Pro-Am Golf Tournament on April 27.

Our aid to Poland

THE desperate disabled man in Poland whose sad plea to The Spastics Society — "I have to beg to survive" — sparked off a mammoth goodwill effort by the Society's staff and supporters, may soon have a VIP visitor from Britain.

Lady Sue Ryder, whose Foundation is channelling the aid being sent to the handicapped people of Poland by Society staff, friends, group members and residents at centres, hopes to call on him during her current Polish tour. She, too, has been touched by the plight of the housebound man, totally disabled, whose bleak life has been revealed in his letters to the new friends he found at the Society. His joyful letter of thanks after the first parcel also contained a shy plea for a razor and a pair of socks, and these items were packed in the second parcel.

In addition to the food and other essentials which have been sent to help Poland's disabled, over £3,000 has been donated by affiliated groups, staff and friends—and this it must be remembered is an "extra" effort and not affecting funds donated for spastic people in Britain.

One very special parcel went from the staff to a young Polish blind man and his guide dog who were both urgently in need of food and vitamins. Completely dependent on each other and both "very hungry," they too found charitable friends in London.

MAY sees the start of the biggest ever single campaign to raise funds for the Stars Organisation for Spastics, the hard-working group of film, TV and stage personalities who support three centres for spastic children and adults.

Thousands of people throughout the country will be involved in the Ski SOS Appeal, which is spearheaded by SOS Vice-President Roger Moore, and which will provide worthwhile fun and enjoyment for volunteers as they raise the cash.

How much money will result from the massive Appeal is a matter of excited conjecture — two previous Ski campaigns for

charity have netted £250,000 — and hopes were high when Ski executives and SOS members, led by President the Lady Anne Tennant and Sir John Mills, met at the launching.

They told the Press about the 55 million Ski yoghurt pots which will feature the appeal. For every 10 ski tops returned, Ski will donate 10p. They told of the volunteers — Scouts, Guides, Lions, Round Tablers — who have pledged their support and will be organising fund raising activities. Of the major firms which are helping, such as VW, offering a mini-bus to the group or individual organising the most original Appeal event between now and the end of September. And, of course, they told of the major events involving the Stars.

First of these is a Celebrities Pro - Am Golf Tournament at the RAC Club, Epsom, on April 27, when a galaxy of star names will compete with amateurs and professionals to help raise a target of £20,000.

North of the Border, the SOS, Scotland will benefit from Appeal funds raised there.

• One man at the launch had a special reason to be pleased and proud. SOS member Roger Kitter met one of the Ski charity appeal planners at a golf match, and suggested the SOS as a worthwhile cause. His suggestion is set to bring the SOS a golden return.



• Roger Kitter, popular entertainer, had a chance meeting which eventually led to the Ski appeal for the SOS.

£1,000 'reward' from Society



The fund raisers are friends too



• A visitor to Colwall Court, the SOS holiday home in Sussex, shares a joke with Leslie Crowther.



• Dickie Henderson with a resident at Wakes Hall SOS home for adults in Essex.



• Anthony Quayle in the workshop at Wakes Hall SOS home for adults in Essex.

End of story...

VERY last word on "The British Way of Birth," the book which has featured so prominently in this month's issue of Spastics News, and all those babies who came to Society HQ for its launch ...



• Nerys Hughes with Colwall Court holiday maker.



• AND what does any superstar baby want after a hard day's posing for the camera? A nice quiet corner of the Director's sofa to sleep it off!

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AS reported in the last issue of Spastics News, it took the Barrow Spastics and Handicapped Children's Society just 12 months to raise the massive sum of £36,000 for an extension for short-stay care to its Hawcoat Lane Centre — a feat that so impressed headquarters it sent a further £1,000.

The unexpected gift resulted from a visit to the centre by Michael Brophy, the Society's Director of Regions. Nigel Smith, the

Society's North West Senior Regional officer explained: "He was terribly impressed and persuaded the Society to give £1,000.

Picture shows Caroline Wilson, aged seven, and daughter of committee member Ray Wilson, was the first guest to stay at the Hawcoat Lane Centre extension. With housemother Jackie Renahan, they greet Ann Hithersay, the Society's Region co-ordinator, who presented a £1,000 cheque to group chairman, Dennis Rose.



• AND what does any superstar baby want after a hard day's posing for the camera? A nice quiet corner of the Director's sofa to sleep it off!



• AND what does any superstar baby want after a hard day's posing for the camera? A nice quiet corner of the Director's sofa to sleep it off!